

# King County Parks **Your** **King County** **Big Backyard**

King County  
Department of Natural Resources and Parks  
Parks and Recreation Division



2009  
**Third Quarter Report**  
Parks Omnibus Ordinance Report  
to the King County Council  
January – September 2009

we're at work so you can play

### Highlights of the Third Quarter

- ❖ Overall, third quarter business revenues in 2009 are lower than the same period in 2008. In addition to the generally poor economic climate, this can be attributed to multiple factors, including an agreement with the City of Enumclaw to operate the King County Fair in 2009, for which they received the fair revenue, an off-year for Cirque du Soleil and a reduced number of concerts at Marymoor.
- ❖ Parking revenue at Marymoor Park is up eleven percent when compared with the third quarter of 2008. This is largely due to violation enforcement, which began July 1 and led to more than \$16,000 in additional parking revenue during the third quarter. Violators are issued a fine of \$35, which is reduced to \$15 if paid in 10 days or even less if converted into a Marymoor Park parking pass.
- ❖ The 2009 Concerts at Marymoor series drew steady attendance overall, with two shows fully sold-out, but with only 12 performances, concert-related revenues were down compared to 2008, when there were 22 shows. Concert revenues through the third quarter of 2009 are more than 90 percent higher than those from the same period in 2007, when there was also a 12 performance concert series.
- ❖ Third quarter revenues at the Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (WKCAC) were up slightly compared to the same period in 2008, thanks to the facility's two major national events in August, the US Open Swimming Championships and the Speedo Junior National Championships. Eleven U.S. Open records and one world record were broken over the course of the U.S. Open event, reaffirming that WKCAC is one of the 'fastest' pools in the country.
- ❖ September 11 was the United Way's Annual Day of Caring, during which a record number of volunteers participated in service projects throughout the King County parks system. There were 14 Day of Caring projects that involved nearly 600 volunteers who provided more than 2,800 hours of service at sites such as Marymoor Park, Cavanaugh Pond, the Greenhouse, Duthie Hill Park, Tanner Landing Park, and Preston Community Center.

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## Parks and Recreation Division 2009 Third Quarter Report

### Introduction

The Omnibus Parks Ordinance (Ordinance 14509), adopted November 18, 2002, by the King County Council, included this reporting requirement for the Parks and Recreation Division:

“The Division shall provide a written report to the council, filed with the clerk of the council, at least four times each year, by March 15, June 15, September 15, and December 15, and more frequently as directed by the council by motion, regarding the execution of the Division’s duties and responsibilities as established in K.C.C.

2.16.045.E. Following transmittal of each written report, the Division shall also make an oral presentation to the council. The written reports and oral presentations shall include, but shall not be limited to, information as to the Division’s efforts in:

- A. Meeting revenue targets under section 7 of this ordinance;*
- B. Implementing entrepreneurial strategies including advertising, leasing and concession agreements;*
- C. Pursuing gifts, bequests and donations, including the value and sources of gifts, bequests and donations received;*
- D. Developing agreements with other organizations to provide recreation services;*
- E. Transferring parks and recreation assets within incorporated areas or potential annexation areas to cities; and*
- F. Community outreach and involvement.”*

This is our seventh year reporting on the accomplishments of the Division. Quarterly reports were transmitted for each quarter from 2003 through 2008. The year 2009 marks the second year of the renewed Parks Levy, which was approved by voters in August 2007, with collections running from January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2013.

We have structured the quarterly report to correspond to the ordinance requirements. We welcome your ideas and input. Please do not hesitate to contact Kevin Brown or Tom Koney of the King County Parks and Recreation Division at 206-296-8687 if you have any questions or suggestions.

## Revenues - Summary

### **Parks and Recreation Division Revenues**

2009 Adopted Revenues	\$28,176,067
2009 Revised Revenues	\$28,125,192
2009 Estimated Revenues <sup>1</sup>	\$27,537,465
2008 Actual Revenues	\$27,714,202

### **Third Quarter - Business Revenues Only**

Levy funds, interest earnings, interfund transfers and similar revenues that are not within the control of the Division are excluded from this total.

**Actual Business Revenues<sup>2</sup>** (includes user fees and enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues)

January 1 – September 30, 2009	\$3,723,630
January 1 – September 30, 2008	\$4,469,167

Third quarter business revenues in 2009 are lower than the same period in 2008. This decrease is due in part to an agreement with the City of Enumclaw to operate the King County Fair in 2009, for which it received the fair revenue, as well as to the transfer of the Renton Pool to the Renton School District during the second quarter of 2008.

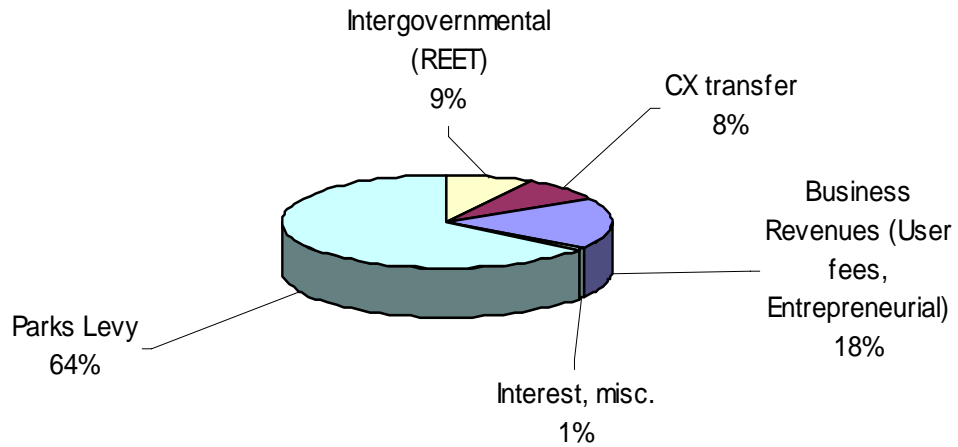
Even with a reduced asset base (due to transfer of facilities), business revenues still comprise about 18 percent of the entire Division's revenue budget (2009), which is similar to the percentage in 2002 at the beginning of the Business Plan (see charts, following page). The ensuing period has seen transfers of facilities, mostly pools, which generated more than \$2 million in revenues. This includes pool transfers in the past two years, which included the Renton Pool transfer to the Renton School District as part of the Benson Hill Annexation in spring 2008 and the Evergreen Pool in the Executive's Lifeboat Strategy, which was mothballed at the end of August 2009 in the absence of new revenues to keep the facility open. The business revenue forecast for the remaining assets has risen from a total of about \$2.3 million in 2002 to nearly \$5 million in the 2009 adopted budget.

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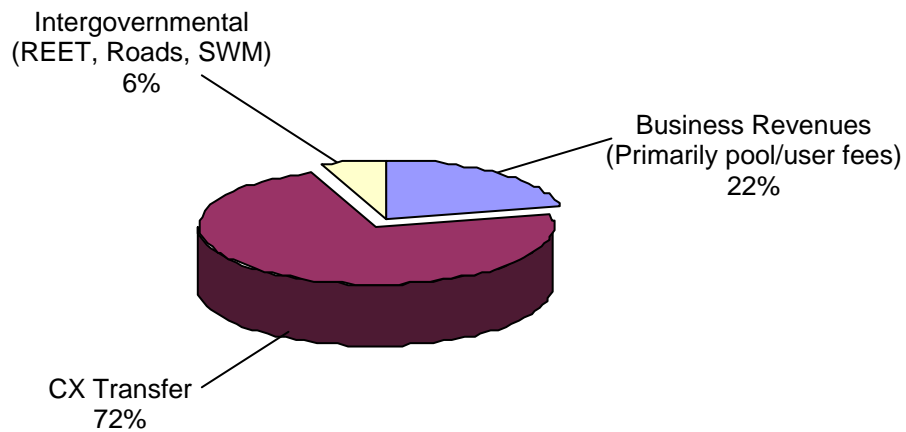
<sup>1</sup> Includes the City of Enumclaw operating the 2009 King County Fair and revised revenue estimates.

<sup>2</sup> Based on ARMS financial reports.

### 2009 Adopted Revenues - \$28M



### 2002 Adopted Revenues - \$26M



## Expenditures – Summary

### **Parks and Recreation Division Expenditures**

2009 Adopted Expenditures	\$27,936,171
2009 Estimated Expenditures <sup>3</sup>	\$27,643,855
2008 Adopted Expenditures	\$27,446,665
2008 Revised Expenditures <sup>4</sup>	\$27,491,310
2008 Actual Expenditures <sup>5</sup>	\$24,586,573

### **Third Quarter 2009 – Actual Expenditures**

January 1 – September 30, 2009	\$19,559,052
January 1 – September 30, 2008	\$18,554,411

With three-quarters of the year having passed, third quarter expenditures were 70 percent of the Division's annual expenditure budget. This expenditure pattern is in line with historical business trends.

As part of the current levy (2008 – 2013), the Division was tasked with increasing maintenance to historic levels prior to 2002. As long as target fund balance is achieved, the Division intends to spend the maximum amount of its expenditure authority on maintaining parks, utilizing levy funds as the voters intended.

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<sup>3</sup> 2009 Estimated figure reflects the City of Enumclaw operating the King County Fair in 2009, reappropriation, 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter and 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Omnibus Ordinances and the Lifeboat Supplemental.

<sup>4</sup> Reflects reappropriation, Benson Hill Annexation and 2008 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Omnibus Ordinance.

<sup>5</sup> 2008 Actuals based on 14<sup>th</sup> month ARMS reports.

## Revenues - Implementing the Business Plan

### Key Business Units

#### Marymoor Park



#### Marymoor Business Unit

	2009 thru Q3	2008 thru Q3	Change (\$)	Change (%)
<b>Traditional</b>				
Rev - facilities	\$130,027	\$145,686	-\$15,659	-11%
Rev - fields	\$578,576	\$545,797	\$32,779	6%
<b>Non-Traditional</b>				
Rev - parking	\$369,831	\$334,662	\$35,169	11%
Rev - concerts	\$276,121	\$470,251	-\$194,130	-41%
Rev - concert ticket sales	\$4,368	\$11,608	-\$7,240	-62%
Rev - Subway	\$19,796	\$17,671	\$2,125	12%
Rev - Pet Garden	\$1,900	\$2,950	-\$1,050	-36%
Sponsors/concessions	\$51,888	\$46,245	\$5,643	12%
Cirque du Soleil*	\$0	\$697,281	-\$697,281	-100%
Naming rights**	\$0	\$115,000	-\$115,000	-100%
<b>Revenues - Total (rounded)</b>	<b>\$1,433,000</b>	<b>\$2,387,000</b>	<b>-\$954,000</b>	<b>-40%</b>
<b>Expenditures (rounded)***</b>	<b>\$1,808,000</b>	<b>\$1,714,000</b>	<b>\$94,000</b>	<b>5%</b>

\* Cirque du Soleil did not take place in 2009. It is scheduled to return to the park in 2010.

\*\* Reflects Group Health's naming rights commitment for the velodrome, which expired in 2008 and was not renewed.

\*\*\* Expenditures include only direct costs and do not include maintenance labor loaned in from other work units ("loan-in labor"). In the year-end (Fourth Quarter) report, annual expenditures will be reported along with annual revenues and compared against the cost recovery targets established in Ordinance 14509.



### **2009 Third Quarter highlights from Marymoor Park include:**

- ❖ Overall, third quarter revenues from Marymoor Park are down when compared to the same quarter in 2008. This can be attributed to several factors, including the poor economic climate, as well as to an off-year for Cirque du Soleil and a modest number of performances during the Concerts at Marymoor. Marymoor Park revenues from the third quarter of 2009 are slightly higher than those from the same period in 2007, the last non-Cirque year.
- ❖ Revenue from ballfields remained steady, up six percent from the third quarter of 2008. As user fees for the synthetic turf fields are higher than for the old all-weather fields, there has been some turn-over among user groups, with new user groups coming in and securing reservations for the fall sports season.
- ❖ Parking revenue is up 11 percent when compared with the third quarter of 2008. This is largely due to violation enforcement, which began July 1 and led to more than \$16,000 in additional parking revenue during the third quarter. Violators are issued a fine of \$35, which is reduced to \$15 if paid in 10 days or even less if converted into a Marymoor Park parking pass.
- ❖ With only 12 concerts in 2009, revenues from the Concerts at Marymoor series and from on-site ticket sales were down considerably compared to 2008, when there were 22 performances. The 2009 series drew steady attendance overall, with two shows fully sold-out. Concert revenues through the third quarter of 2009 are more than 90 percent higher than those from the same period in 2007, when there was also a twelve-performance concert series.
- ❖ Concession revenues were up during the third quarter of 2008, reflecting higher park use during the summer's excellent weather. Also contributing to increased concession traffic is the new Marymoor Connector Trail, a bike/pedestrian path through the park, which has greatly facilitated pedestrian movement around the park.

## Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (WKCAC)



### Aquatic Center Business Unit

	2009 thru Q3	2008 thru Q3	Change (\$)	Change (%)
<b>Traditional</b>				
Rev - facilities	\$545,506	\$469,541	\$75,965	16%
Rev - courses	\$109,729	\$135,613	-\$25,884	-19%
Rev - drop in	\$31,254	\$38,754	-\$7,500	-19%
Rev - Conference Ctr	\$18,066	\$36,333	-\$18,267	-50%
<b>Non-Traditional</b>				
Rev - concession stand	\$13,828	\$12,297	\$1,531	12%
Rev - concessions	\$1,030	\$472	\$558	118%
<b>Revenues - Total (rounded)</b>	<b>\$719,000</b>	<b>\$693,000</b>	<b>\$26,000</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Expenditures (rounded)*</b>	<b>\$1,639,000</b>	<b>\$1,489,000</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>10%</b>

\* Expenditures include only direct costs and do not include maintenance labor loaned in from other work units ("loan-in labor"). In the year-end (Fourth Quarter) report, annual expenditures will be reported along with annual revenues and compared against the cost recovery targets established in Ordinance 14509.

**2009 Third Quarter highlights from Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (WKCAC) include:**

- ❖ WKCAC revenues during the third quarter of 2009 were up slightly as compared to the same period in 2008. The facility hosted two major national events in August, the U.S. Open Swimming Championships and the Speedo Junior National Championships. Eleven U.S. Open records and one world record were broken over the course of the U.S. Open event, reaffirming that WKCAC is one of the 'fastest' pools in the country.
- ❖ Facility revenue, which includes events and team trainings, was up 16 percent during the third quarter of 2009, reflecting the two national events. These major events helped to offset lower revenues from other items in this category, such as team trainings and smaller events, which experienced cancellations in part from the 2009 user fee increases.
- ❖ Revenues in other categories (courses, drop-in, conference center) were negatively affected due to hosting the national events, as swimming lessons had to be cancelled and the Conference Center could not be booked. Repairs to the facility's HVAC system required different parts of the facility to be closed, also negatively affecting revenues.
- ❖ In July, a new vendor took over the concession stand, replacing the former Subway tenant, and concession stand revenues are up 12 percent compared to the third quarter of 2008.
- ❖ Revenue in the general concessions category is up due to the timing of receiving payments. These revenues are projected to be similar to 2008 for the year.

## Recreation, Ballfields, and Facilities



### Fields and Facilities Business Unit

	2009 thru Q3	2008 thru Q3	Change (\$)	Change (%)
<b>Traditional</b>				
Rev - ballfields	\$324,773	\$308,416	\$16,357	5%
Rev - facilities	\$159,875	\$129,211	\$30,664	24%
<b>Non-Traditional</b>				
Rev - RV camping	\$45,556	\$47,348	-\$1,792	-4%
<b>Revenues - Total (rounded)</b>	<b>\$530,000</b>	<b>\$485,000</b>	<b>\$45,000</b>	<b>9%</b>

Note: Expenditure information on facilities and ballfields is tracked annually and will be discussed in the Fourth Quarter Report.

**2009 Third Quarter fields and facilities highlights include:**

- ❖ Revenues from fields and facilities were up nine percent from the same period in 2008. This can largely be attributed to rental facility improvements and ballfield conversions to synthetic turf that are now generating solid revenue for the Division.
- ❖ Ballfield revenues continue to remain steady, mainly due to revenue generated from last year's major synthetic turf field conversion projects at Mel Olson Stadium and Preston Athletic Fields.
- ❖ Revenue from facilities is up 24 percent compared with the third quarter of 2008, mainly due to event rentals at the recently renovated Preston Community Center. Weddings at this facility more than tripled this summer, thanks to some targeted marketing efforts on wedding websites. Another popular wedding rental facility has been the Bridge Shelter at Tolt-MacDonald Park, which the Division has been creatively marketing. For example, the Tolt-MacDonald Wedding Package, which includes a one-day rental of the Bridge Shelter and two nights stay in the park's six yurts, was popular and led to increased rentals of the Bridge Shelter.
- ❖ Revenue from camping was down slightly through the third quarter, as the campground loop and tent sites were closed in July for construction related to the flood mitigation project.

## Swimming Pools



### Swimming Pools Business Unit

Includes: Evergreen, Vashon and Cottage Lake Facilities

	2009 thru Q3	2008 thru Q3	Change (\$)	Change (%)
<b>Traditional</b>				
Rev - Pool Fees	\$224,105	\$318,300	-\$94,195	-30%
Rev - Concessions	\$228	\$191	\$37	19%
<b>Revenues - Total (rounded)</b>	<b>\$224,000</b>	<b>\$318,000</b>	<b>-\$94,000</b>	<b>-30%</b>
<b>Expenditures (rounded)*</b>	<b>\$675,000</b>	<b>\$741,000</b>	<b>-\$66,000</b>	<b>-9%</b>

\*Expenditures include only direct costs and do not include maintenance labor loaned in from other work units ("loan-in labor"). In the year-end (Fourth Quarter) report, annual expenditures will be reported along with annual revenues and compared against the cost recovery targets established in Ordinance 14509.

### 2009 Third Quarter swimming pool highlights include:

- ❖ Although the outdoor pools, Vashon and Cottage Lake, had safe and successful summer seasons, revenue in this category was affected by the closure of Evergreen Pool as of September 1, 2009. Revenue from swimming pools was down in the third quarter.
- ❖ Both outdoor pools hosted large summer events in addition to their regular programming. More than 174 participants attended the pools' free water safety program, Summer Splashtacular, and Vashon Pool also hosted a competitive swimming clinic in August that featured two U.S. Swim Team Olympic gold medalists and involved more than 100 athletes.
- ❖ The reduction in revenue also reflects the closure of the Evergreen Pool at the end of August 2009 as a result of cuts to general fund.



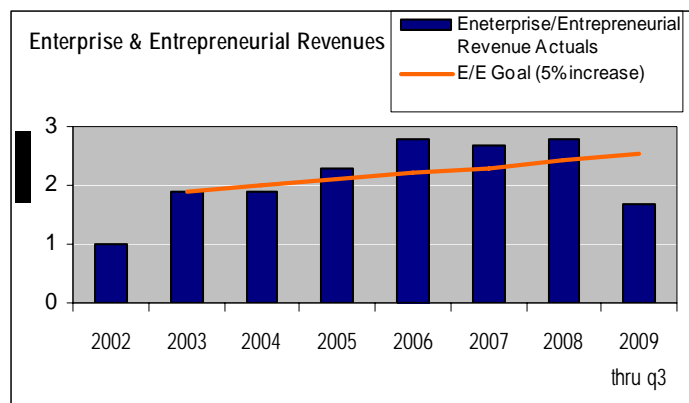
## Implementing Entrepreneurial Strategies New Ways of Raising Revenues



### Entrepreneurial Strategies

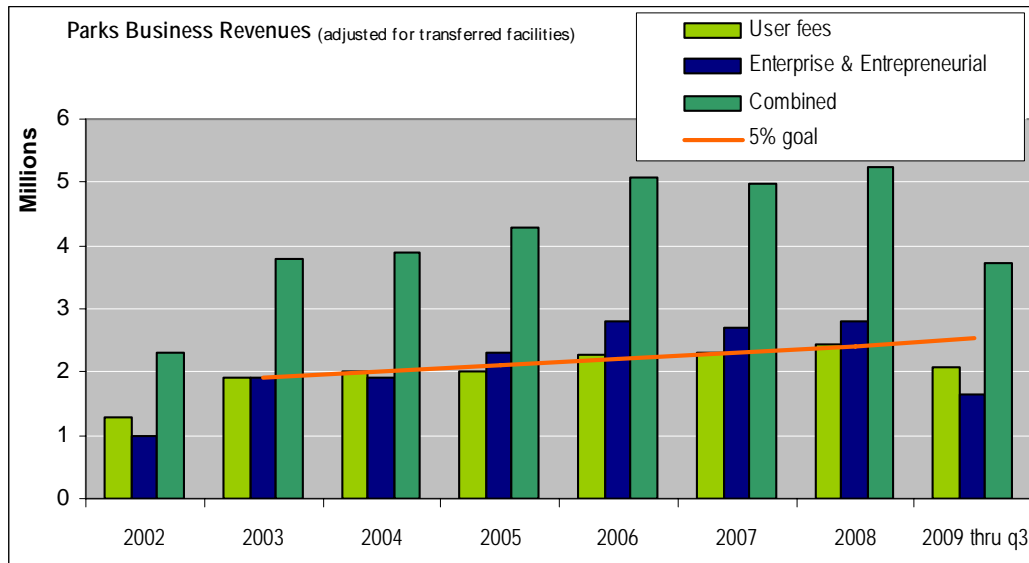
Business revenues through the third quarter of 2009 were \$3.7 million, which is down from the same period in 2008. This can largely be attributed to the generally poor economic climate, to 2009 being an off-year for Cirque du Soleil, and to a modest Concerts at Marymoor series as mentioned previously in this report. In 2009, the Division has been focusing on building diverse revenue streams that will lead to steady, sustainable funding in the long term.

Consistent with the vision of the Parks Business Plan, the Division has taken steps to maximize business revenues and continues to explore other actions that reduce the tax subsidy needed for the operations and maintenance of the Division's facilities. Core revenue-generating activities outlined in the Parks Business Plan include maximizing revenue from the Division's existing asset base; establishing corporate sponsorships, naming rights, and other contributions; and pursuing gifts, bequests, and legacy donations.



The Division categorizes business revenues in two ways: enterprise/entrepreneurial revenues and user fee revenues. Enterprise/entrepreneurial revenues include a myriad of non-traditional activities, ranging from corporate partnerships to creative promotions to special facility rentals (such as the Concerts at Marymoor series and Cirque du Soleil). These are generated largely as a

result of cultivation efforts and partnerships established by the Division's staff. User fee revenues represent more traditional recreational activities, such as ballfield reservation fees, and are set based on market conditions and other factors. Recent revenue increases in the user fee category are largely the result of capital investments, such as upgrading athletic fields to synthetic turf and renovating facilities appropriate to rent for private, special events.



### 2009 Third Quarter business highlights include:

- ❖ On July 1, 2009, Marymoor Park began issuing fines to violators of the \$1 parking fee. If paid within ten days, the \$35 fine can be reduced to \$15 and reduced even further by purchasing monthly or annual parking passes. Due in part to the new enforcement measures, parking revenue is up 11 percent when compared with the third quarter of 2008, with more than \$16,000 coming from enforcement fines.
- ❖ A new concessionaire, Johnnie's Dog House, began operating at WKCAC during the third quarter of 2009, taking over the concession stand from Subway.
- ❖ With such a diverse inventory, the Division's parks and trails are being sought out more and more often to host non-traditional sporting events, such as cyclo-cross bicycle competitions, trail running competitions, triathlons and other running competitions, and equestrian events. These types of events occurred throughout the system during the third quarter of 2009, contributing revenue and establishing solid partnerships with a variety of new user groups.



## Pursuing Gifts, Bequests, and Donations



### 2009 Third Quarter gift and donation highlights include:

- ❖ The King County Parks Legacy Fund continues to draw support from individuals and businesses.
  - In particular, the Division has several Legacy bench donations in different stages of development. For one donation, the Cougar Mountain Park field staff constructed a Legacy bench along one of the park's hiking trails, using salvaged wood from the park's downed trees. This type of "backcountry" bench will serve as a model for Legacy bench donations in the Division's natural areas.
  - To date, the Legacy Fund has received nearly \$30,000 in gifts and bench/tree donations and is on track to meet the revenue goal set for 2009.
- ❖ Although not a direct applicant, the Division collaborated with partner agencies and organizations on two different American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) proposals for projects that would take place on Division property. The proposed projects were the U.S. Forest Service Forest Health and Green Jobs project, and the Technology Access Foundation Community Learning Space project. The partners anticipate award notifications during the fourth quarter of 2009 or the first quarter of 2010.

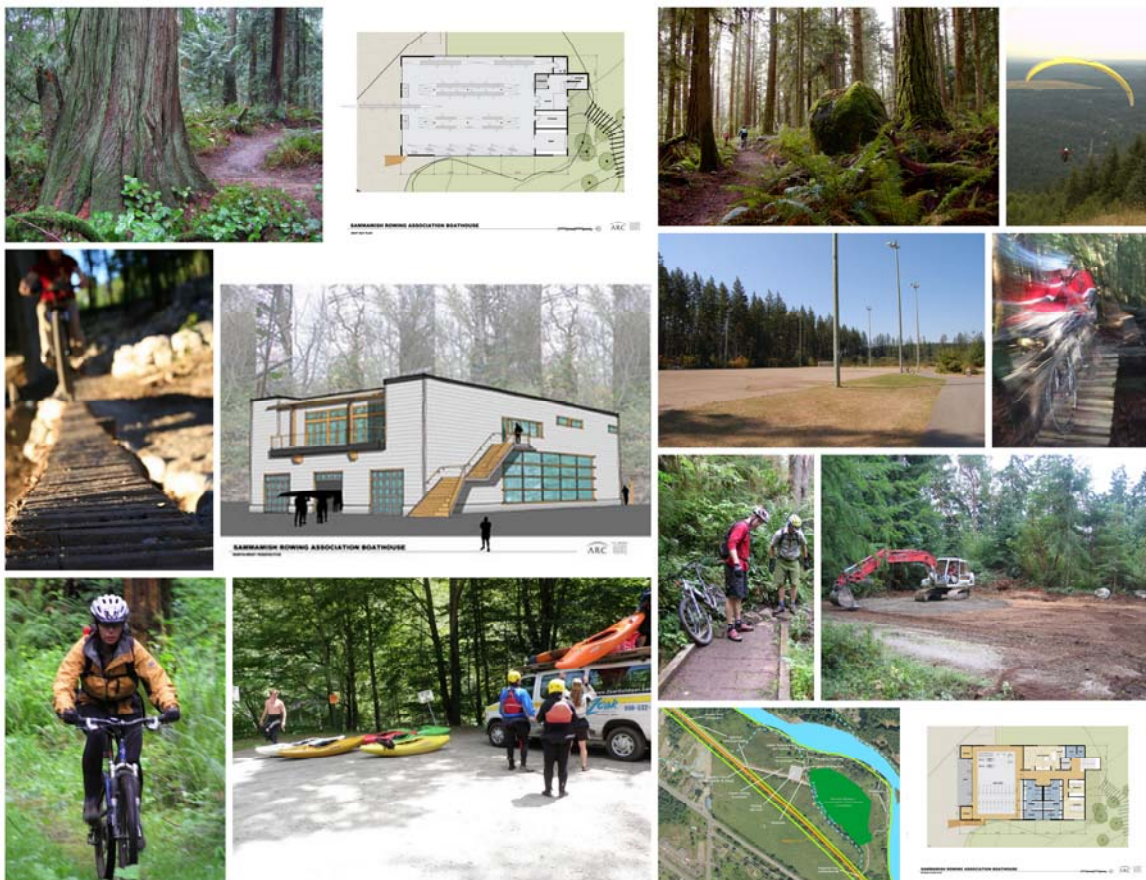
## Agreements with Other Organizations

### **Community Partnerships and Grants (CPG) Program**

The Community Partnerships and Grants (CPG) Program continues to develop partnerships that result in new facilities and amenities in King County's parks. There are currently 36 projects in various stages of negotiation, planning, design, permitting, or construction that represent \$13 million in CPG grants and/or Capital Improvement Program commitments. By leveraging community investments (cash, grants, in-kind donations, volunteer labor, etc.), these CPG projects, when completed, will add new public recreation facilities valued at an estimated \$64 million.

Progress during the third quarter included:

- Design development and permitting continued for the Ravensdale Park synthetic turf field conversion
- Design development underway for synthetic turf field conversion at Petrovitsky Park
- Island Center Forest improvements completed
- Paragliding parking lot expansion permitting underway
- Duthie Hill Park – mountain bike boardwalk completed, Phase 1 under construction
- Seattle Rowing Association boathouse (Marymoor Park) permits received, construction in Spring 2010
- Agreements reached for new CPG projects with Maple Valley Rotary, Seattle Parks Foundation, NW Parks Foundation, Kent Youth Soccer Association, and Mirrormont Community Association



## **Transferring Parks and Recreation Assets**

Transferring local recreation amenities to cities and focusing on rural and regional facilities has been a key element of the Parks Business Plan, and many transfers have taken place since 2002. Consistent with the Parks Business Plan, the transfer of parks and pools within the Urban Growth Area (UGA) is an on-going discussion as part of the broader County annexation strategy. These efforts have intensified in light of the continuing pressure on the County's general fund, which supports the Division's UGA facilities.

During the third quarter, residents in the North Highline annexation area approved annexation to the City of Burien, which is scheduled to take place in March 2010. It is anticipated that this will include the transfer of at least five of the Division's UGA facilities: Arbor Lake, Hazel Valley, Hilltop, Salmon Creek, and Southern Heights. Additional Potential Annexation Area (PAA) votes in Kirkland and Kent could result in park transfers in the near future.

Other facilities under consideration for transfer include:

<b>Park</b>	<b>Potential Jurisdiction</b>
132 <sup>nd</sup> Square Park	City of Kirkland
Big Finn Hill	City of Kirkland
Bingamon Pond	City of Federal Way
Bridle Crest Trail (portion)	City of Bellevue
Bryn Mawr	City of Renton
Boulevard Lane	City of Renton
Camelot	City of Federal Way
Cascade	City of Renton
Cecil Moses	TBD
East Norway Hill	City of Bothell
Edith Moulton	City of Kirkland
Evergreen Athletic Fields	TBD
Five Mile Lake	City of Federal Way
Green Tree	City of Kent
Hamm Creek	City of Seattle
Juanita Heights Park	TBD
Kentlake Athletic Fields	City of Kent; Kent School District
Kingsgate Park	City of Kirkland
Klahanie Park	TBD
Lake Geneva	City of Federal Way

*Continued on next page*

<b>Park</b>	<b>Potential Jurisdiction</b>
Lakewood Park	TBD
Maplewood Heights	City of Renton
Maplewood Park	City of Renton
May Creek Park	City of Renton
North Green River Park (portion)	City of Kent
North Meridian	City of Kent
North Shorewood	TBD
Park Orchard	City of Kent
Puget Sound	TBD
Renton	City of Renton
Sierra Heights / Honey Dew	City of Renton
Site #1 Duwamish	City of Tukwila
Skyway	City of Renton
South County Ballfields	City of Federal Way
Sunset Playfield	City of SeaTac
White Center Pond Natural Area	TBD
White Center Heights	TBD
Windsor Vista	City of Kirkland



## **Community Outreach and Involvement**



### **King County Parks Volunteer Program**

The tremendous dedication of returning and new volunteers continues to enhance parks and trails throughout King County's system. During the third quarter of 2009, 1,843 volunteers provided 8,545 hours of service during 87 scheduled events and independent service projects. The projects, which took place in more than 20 parks, consisted of trail work (16 events), restoration and noxious weed removal projects (27 events), King County Greenhouse and Nursery work parties (4 events) and park maintenance and improvement projects (40 events).

#### **2009 Third Quarter volunteer involvement highlights include:**

- ❖ In an effort to reduce the environmental impacts of hosting large events in King County's parks, the Division once again organized the volunteer-based Marymoor Concert Recycling and Composting Crew, now in its third year. Through this program, volunteers instruct concert-goers on proper disposal of food waste, plates, cups, utensils, and other garbage, which significantly reduces the amount of waste generated from the concerts that gets sent to the landfill. Highlights from 2009 included:
  - Nearly all the concert vendors voluntarily switched to compostable or recyclable plates, cups, and utensils.
  - More than half of this year's volunteers were returning participants.
  - Volunteers provided some 500 hours of service over the course of the series' twelve performances.
  - Once again, more than 50 percent of waste generated by the concert series was diverted from the landfill.
- ❖ September 11 was the United Way's Annual Day of Caring, where a record number of volunteers participated in service projects throughout King County Parks system.

There were 14 Day of Caring projects that involved nearly 600 volunteers who provided more than 2,800 hours of service. Highlights included:

- Teams of Microsoft employees worked at multiple locations on tasks such as clearing Scot's Broom and other invasive plants, mulching, weeding, and planting, and helping build and repair hiking and mountain biking trails.
- Project locations included the Greenhouse, Cavanaugh Pond, Whitney Bridge, Duthie Hill, Cottage Lake, Marymoor, Tanner Landing, Grand Ridge, Cougar Mountain, Klahanie, Preston Community Center, and Preston Athletic Fields.

### Community Outreach and Engagement Initiatives



The King County Parks and Recreation Division has a variety of ways to reach out to, communicate with, and engage park user groups, other stakeholders, and the general public.

#### Electronic outreach

##### King County Parks' e-newsletter and blog

The Division continues to send regular email newsletters to an opt-in list with more than 2,000 subscribers. The newsletter format focuses recent news, press releases, and blog posts and helps direct additional traffic to the Division's website.

The Division continues to improve the King County Parks Blog at <http://kingcountyparks.wordpress.com/>. Through this format, the Division is able to post announcements, news, photos, videos, and other multi-media information in real time and even from the field. Readers are encouraged to submit comments, and other blogs and media outlets have referenced content in the blog, helping drive greater traffic.

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### King County Parks on Facebook

The Division continues to maintain a “page” on the social media website, Facebook, and currently has approximately 300 “fans”. Similar to the blog, the Division uses this tool to post multi-media information, announcements, and other news in real time. Fans can post comments and other feedback, providing an additional avenue to interact directly with Division staff.

### [www.parksfeedback.com](http://www.parksfeedback.com)

Through *parksfeedback.com*, the Division continues to receive a variety of compliments, suggestions, feedback, and notifications, which are delivered directly to the email inboxes of Division staff. While the feedback system does not provide a statistical gauge for constituent satisfaction, it is a powerful tool that asks a series of multiple choice questions and allows users to write in comments and include their email or telephone number to receive a direct response from the Division. The notifications sent by park users through the *parksfeedback.com* tool also serve as “eyes and ears on the ground” for the Division’s 25,000 acres of property.

### King County Parks on KCNews Twitter

The Division continues to send news items to be broadcast over the general King County News Twitter account, which has more than 3,000 followers including media outlets, local non-profit organizations, and the general public.

### Media Outreach

As part of the Division’s new website structure, key pages within the website now include links to relevant press releases and earned media coverage. The list is generated automatically and is refreshed as new articles are published, contributing dynamic, up-to-date content.

### King County Parks’ Press Releases

During the third quarter of 2009, the Division, through the efforts of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks Public Affairs Section, released 9 press releases covering everything from summer event announcements, new partnerships, and ways to support the Division to volunteer opportunities and other news.

### **Other outreach initiatives from the third quarter of 2009**

- ❖ Once again, the 2009 Movies@Marymoor outdoor cinema series was a big draw. With Epic Events providing the audio/visual support, this year’s series offered four family-oriented films on Wednesday evenings in July and August. Attendance was strong and donations, which help underwrite the cost of offering the series, were higher per person than in past years. Although no title sponsor was secured, successful new partnerships with Experience Music Project | Science Fiction Museum, the Seafair Pirates, and Flying Saucer Pizza provided additional no-cost promotional capacity, and the Division anticipates working with these partners on other activities in the future.

- ❖ In addition to providing information at all of the performances of the Concerts at Marymoor, the Division participated in several events and workplace fairs during the third quarter of 2009. Highlights included:
  - TrailsFest, sponsored by Washington Trails Association. This annual event draws around 3,000 hiking and outdoor enthusiasts and provided an excellent way to introduce the Division's new backcountry trail maps.
  - Boeing Health and Wellness Fairs. The Division attended two of the five fairs, each of which was held at a different Boeing work site and involved thousands of Boeing employees.
  - Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) Division Days. Through this annual event, each DNRP Division is invited to display information about its respective activities in the lobby of the King Street Center building.
- ❖ The Division continues to refine and upgrade content on its website and related links to news articles, the photo gallery, and social media. During the third quarter, the majority of website traffic sought information about the Concerts at Marymoor, the Movies@Marymoor, and the pools. With a new website structure, implemented in early 2009, the Division has been able to improve tracking and analytics regarding website usage, which will be addressed more completely in the 2009 Fourth Quarter report.
- ❖ In late 2008, local community development non-profit organization, Pomegranate Center, selected Friends of Skyway Park as its beneficiary group for a project called the DIG Fund. Through this project, Pomegranate Center provided capacity-building assistance to Friends of Skyway Park to fundraise and construct gateway enhancements at the two pedestrian entrances to Skyway Park, implementing one of items from the community-based Skyway Park vision. The gateway structures, which are totem-like poles featuring nature themes that complement the new plaza and restored wetland, were constructed and painted by volunteers over the course of a weekend and installed by the Division in August 2009.